Periodical check up of elephants

1883. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many elephants engaged for joy rides for tourists had gone mad and had to be killed by forest officials;

(b) if so, the details of such cases during the last two years and the causes for their going mad;

(c) whether there is no system of periodical check up of elephants and there is no cure to treat madness in elephants instead of killing them; and

(d) how mortal remains of killed elephants are disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) There are few instances of elephants, engaged for joy ride for tourists, going out of the Mahout's control temporarily. However, no incidence of such elephants going out of the control to the extent that they had to killed by forest officials has been reported by any State/UT in last two years. The common reasons of elephants getting out of control are:— (i) being in musth (ii) being over used (iii) being disturbed by other wild animals.

(c) The State/UT Forest Departments do have a system of periodical check up of elephants kept in Zoos, Tiger Reserves, National Parks and Sanctuaries for joy-ride purposes. Normally, the male elephants become aggressive during and just after the 'Masth' period and there is no cure except not to use them during this period.

(d) Most of the States follow the practice of burying the mortal remains of the dead elephants, however, in some States they are burnt also.

Forest investment programme

†1884. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has recently become a part of the Forest Investment Programme, an organization of the countries of the world involved in forest development programmes at international level;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the contribution made by India to this organization;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in India forest cover is much less as compared to physical area and it has started affecting our agriculture and economy;

(d) if so, whether Government has formulated a plan for extension and development of forests in the country and has submitted it to that organization; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. The National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages the National goal of having minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover. As against this, as per India State of Forest Report, 2009, the forest and tree cover of the country is 23.8% of the geographical area. The forest and tree cover is gradually improving.

(d) and (e) Question does not arise, in view of the position stated in reply to part (a) and (b) above.

Environmental clearance to Srinagar power project

1885. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Srinagar project submitted by Alaknanda Hydropower Ltd. was granted environmental clearance on 3 May, 1985 for a 200 MW project having a 63 metres high dam and a maximum pond level of 603 metres;

(b) whether it is also a fact that environment clearance lapsed after five years but was illegally revalidated on 27 July, 1999 and again in 2006;

(c) whether the project now being set up with 330 MW capacity and 90 metre high dam is violating the environmental clearance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action proposed to be taken against the concerned officials and the promoters of the company for illegal increase in capacity and dam height?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Srinagar Hydro Electric Project was accorded environmental clearance on 3rd May, 1985 to U.P. State Electricity Board for generation of 200 MW. The environmental clearance was later transferred to M/s Duncan North Hydro Power Co. Ltd. and subsequently to M/s Alaknanda Hydropower Ltd.

(b) As major construction work was not started, the Ministry informed the project proponent that the environmental clearance should be treated as lapsed and fresh appraisal of project is required. Based on the information and clarifications received from the State Government and project proponent, the environmental clearance was revalidated for enhanced capacity of 330 MW.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Quality of Ganga water

†1886. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.